

Associated Billing Center's
Newsletter

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A Message From Mona



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I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the many providers who recommended Associated Billing Center, LLC to their colleagues searching for a mental health billing company in 2018. I believe this is a tribute to our team members and our adherence to our company mission statement which reads in part:

"Assist our clients in improving the profitability of their practice while adhering to the strictest ethical and moral guidelines. It is our objective to provide our clients with services of superior quality and value. We want to strengthen our provider's ability to serve the surrounding community."

Also, I appreciate the feedback you give us concerning this Newsletter every month. This is your Newsletter and we appreciate suggestions as well as contributions for future editions.

Recently, I have had several conversations with providers about the operation of their practice from marketing to billing to planning. Please do not hesitate to give me a call for my thoughts. Our conversations are enjoyable and enlightening.

I wish you and your family good health, happiness and a productive 2019.

Best Regards,
Mona



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We Need to Worry About Toddlers Too

Adults do not have this market cornered. Toddlers participate in big numbers as well. Many are simply addicted to their cell phone screens. A recent study published in the journal JAMA Pediatrics finds a direct association between screen time at ages 2 and 3 and development at 3 and 5. The Washington Post reports that nearly 40 percent of children between the ages of 2 and 4 play with mobile devices.

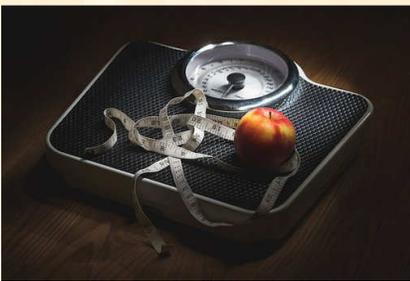
The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends pre school aged children should spend no more than one hour a day interacting with a screen. On average, the study reports that children ages 2 to 5 were viewing screens two to three hours per day. Did the screen act as a babysitting device? And, if the answer is in the affirmative, shame on those parents who allow such a debilitating exercise to occur.

The National Institutes of Health recently began a \$300-million study to examine the effects of screen time on developing brains. Early results revealed that kids who use screens for more than 7 hours per day show physical changes to the brain in the form of premature thinning of the cortex. Early results also indicate that kids who spent more than two hours per day on devices scored lower on language and thinking tests. Researchers indicate that the jury is still out on potential long term hazards of excessive exposure to social media among those in the toddler age bracket.

Something else to think about: Several studies have shown children face increased health risks from microwave radiation given off by wireless devices. Although the data here is conflicting, links between MWR and cancer have been observed in some cases. Again, nothing conclusive here and of course the debate on the issue continues.

Think About This: A team of researchers at the University of Iowa have discovered that by age 2, 90 percent of children who have access to social media devices had acquired a moderate skill level to use that tablet. Maybe we need to transfer some of that skill level to the art of "human to human" communication.

Source: Gary R'nel



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Size: It Could Matter in the Workplace

Several studies have recently shown that obesity in the workplace could affect the perception your employer and co-workers have about you. Employees with an expanded BMI can be stereotyped as lazy, unmotivated, unintelligent, sloppy and lacking willpower. It is a stigma that eventually could cost an employee a promotion or even a job.

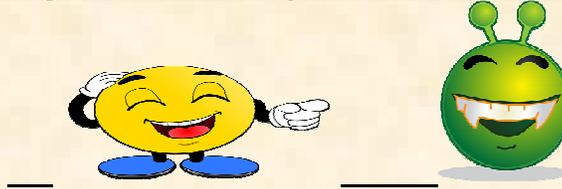
Women suffer more than men. Louise, a manager at a telecom company says the corporate ladder was downsized to a step stool because of her weight. Louise says that at size 24 she was not invited to meetings, she was not meeting with potential clients and was very much hidden in the background.

Then she started losing weight, got down to a size 12 and found that she got more opportunities at work. She says that within 12 months of losing weight she had gone from managing six people to more than one-hundred. Researchers at the University of Exeter found that overweight females work longer hours, are considered less qualified for leadership positions and are expected to exhibit less stress.

Interesting Note: Researchers at Vanderbilt confirm that overweight women earn less money than slimmer women while obese men seem to do just as well as their fit counterpart. The final tally: According to researchers heavy women earn \$9,000 less than their average weight counterparts; very heavy women earned \$19,000 less. Sadly, most states adhere to a long-recognized practice that allows employers to fire employees for any reason they want: at will employment. Exceptions include race, color, age, gender, religion or natural origin.

Source: Gary R'nel

Laugh a Little or Maybe A Lot: It's Good Therapy



◆ (This joke contains adult content) A therapist was conducting a group session with four young mothers and their small children. "You all have obsessions," he observed. To the first mother he said, "You are obsessed with eating. You even named your daughter Candy."

He turned to the second mom. "Your obsession is money. Again, it manifests itself in your child's name, Penny." He turned to the third mom. "Your obsession is alcohol and your child's name is Brandy." At this point, the fourth mother got up, took her little boy by the hand and whispered, "Come on, Dick, let's go home."

- ◆ The best thing about being schizophrenic is that I'm never alone.
- ◆ Patient to Therapist: I can't concentrate, one minute I'm ok, and the next minute, I'm blank. Therapist to Patient: And how long have you had this complaint? Patient to Therapist: What complaint?
- ◆ I told my therapist that I was talking to myself. I was surprised when she responded "That's ok..Just hold a mobile phone by your mouth."
- ◆ How many social workers does it take to change a lightbulb? None. They empower it to change itself.
- ◆ Instead of calling 911 a patient calls his therapist and says his son swallowed a razor-blade. The therapist advises the patient to call 911 immediately. Then asked what else have you done in the meantime? The patient's father responds "I shaved with an electric razor."

Source:workjoke.com

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Artificial Intelligence Robots: The Impact on the American Workplace

According to a newly released Brookings Institution report, a quarter of U.S. jobs will be severely disrupted because of Artificial Intelligence robots. The report states that roughly 36 million Americans hold jobs with "high exposure" to automation. Among those likely to be affected: waiters, cooks and others in the food services sector, short-haul truck drivers and clerical office workers. Mark Muro, the lead author of the study says, "This population is going to need to upskill, or change jobs fast." On the subject of timelines- Muro says changes could occur in a few years or two decades. Much will depend on the actual job itself. For instance, self-checkout kiosks and computerized hotel concierges will be taken over by impersonal robots. Some economists are predicting the U.S. could experience a recession in 2020-while similar shifts toward automation took place in the early stages of previous recessions. The trend toward AI Robots could hit the Midwest and the Rustbelt the hardest where a big percentage of the local labor markets are employed in labor intensive manufacturing. The possible silver lining in the cloud of AI worker displacement is that there will be countless new jobs created simultaneously according to several economists. For those who believe that AI Robots will mostly affect blue collar workers-well that is not the case. The Goldman Sachs equity trading floor in the year 2000 hosted 500 individuals. Today, that same floor is home to 200 high speed servers and two to three individuals. How the final numbers will crunch is inconclusive at this time. Source: Gary R'nel

Associated Billing Center, LLC ↔ Therapist Feedback

Many of you have inquired about credentialing and recredentialing services. After thorough research in the marketplace to discover a credentialing service that meets our expectations-we are now referring our solo and group practices to this company. Several colleagues of mine in the American Medical Billing Association are utilizing this service for credentialing needs. Please give me a call for a referral here. All credentialing updates are copied to our office. Also, a reminder-new Medicare cards have now been mailed to all eligible enrollees. During the transition period through March, 2019, providers can use original Medicare IDs if necessary. Please provide Associated Billing Center, LLC with these new numbers upon receipt in your office. Thanks, *Mona*

Stories You Simply Need to Know About



✓ All is not as it appears. You find yourself admitted to a not for profit hospital. Undoubtedly, they will provide you with a packet of information that includes instructions on how to make a donation to that facility. But, there may be an "inside job" taking place here as well. Non profits often contract with market data firms to screen patients' wealth to gauge their propensity to donate based on public records. According to Kaiser Health News many hospitals conduct nightly wealth screenings-using software that culls information from a variety of sources to gauge which patients are likely to be the best sources for donations. Kaiser reports that if you are selected as a promising target for fundraising you could get a visit from a hospital executive, as well as extra amenities like a bathrobe or a nicer waiting area for your family.



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✓ There is a first time for everything and this year's Super Bowl is no exception. This "first time" event is taking place on the sidelines, not on the field. Quinton Peron and Napoleon Jinnies will be the first male cheerleaders at the Super Bowl in NFL history. They will be cheering for the Rams alongside their female counterparts. The duo actually made history at the start of the season when they, along with Jesse Hernandez of the New Orleans Saints, (Yes, those Saints who many contest should have been a Super Bowl participant) became the first male cheerleaders in league history. The Indianapolis Colts and the Baltimore Ravens have had stuntmen before who did not cheer side by side with their female squad mates.



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✓ Researchers at the University of Miami have discovered that people with tattoos are more likely to have had a higher number of sex partners in the past year. The survey of 2,008 adults also concluded that people with tattoos were smokers and were more likely than the general population to have been incarcerated at one time. These individuals were also more likely to be diagnosed with a mental health issue. Ok, let's flip the coin. Multiple tattoos were found to reduce cortisol levels, improving the immune system while reducing stress levels according to the American Journal of Human Biology. For some job types visible tattoos are preferred. The University of St. Andrews says because they can help to present an image that the company wants to be associated with.

Source: Gary R'nel

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